



Valleycrest Bulletin

DAYTON, OHIO

Volume 1 - Issue 4

January 2003

Mark your calendars

EPA and Ohio EPA will hold a public meeting to discuss activities at the Valleycrest Site.

Date: February 25, 2003

Time: 7-10 p.m.

Location: Stebbins High School
1900 Harshman Road
Dayton, Ohio

This survey is an opportunity for the community to tell us at EPA how well we are doing at listening to your concerns and allowing citizens to participate in the planning and decision-making process. The survey will be sent to all people on our current mailing list. The survey will not ask for your name, address, or phone number, so please do not provide that information on the form or the postage-paid envelope.

The survey consists of nine questions with multiple choice answers, and one open-ended question, which allows comments on any aspect of the cleanup. The questionnaire will arrive with a postage-paid envelope for easy return to the contractor. The survey will be mailed in January 2003.

EPA Region 5 is again pleased to bring the Valleycrest Bulletin to the community. This issue of the bulletin:

- Announces a community survey
- Recounts the National Community Involvement Conference, Portland, Ore.
- Provides community news
- Discusses a report by the group of companies performing site activities
- Summarizes a report by Ohio EPA
- Reports progress of the site cleanup

Community Survey

As the community is aware, EPA has been coordinating the cleanup of the Valleycrest site. EPA believes the active and meaningful involvement of the community in the cleanup process is critical to its success, therefore, an independent contractor will implement a survey at EPA's request.

Valleycrest Goes to Oregon

On June 25, 2002, Valleycrest was in Portland, Ore., in spirit and in substance. The cleanup project was one of 40 selected from hundreds of submissions to be presented at the 2002 EPA National Community Involvement Conference. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to share the Valleycrest story. That story is extensive and the presenters decided it was not feasible to speak about the legitimate individual stories. As Susan Willeke of Ohio EPA's, Public Interest Center said, "One of the disadvantages of working on a complex technical site that is teeming with personal and emotional issues, is the many opportunities for making mistakes. One of the advantages, however, is the tremendous opportunity for learning from these mistakes and moving forward with better understanding and a renewed commitment to environmental excellence and community involvement."

The presentation focused on renewed commitment to the community and the environment, and to the Valleycrest site. Each of the four presenters brought unique perspectives by which to involve and inform the audience.

Steve Renninger, EPA on-scene coordinator was the first to address the audience. Steve gave an historical overview of the history of the Valleycrest Landfill and shared how the site came

to be placed on the National Priorities List. He was very good in laying the groundwork that created the dynamics of the site. The relationships between EPA, Ohio EPA, the community, the Valleycrest Neighbors and Concerned Citizens (VNCC) and the group of companies performing site activities were established in this segment of the presentation.

Gary Geisel, representing the VNCC, provided a community perspective. He did an excellent job of presenting examples on how the community garnered the resources to create its own distinct voice on the Valleycrest issues. Gary gave a clear and understandable image of the community organizing itself and initiating steps to empower people. He explained how concerned citizens communicated with their elected representatives, local government and the media, and staged press conferences, rallies, and vigils to send a strong statement about their commitment to the landfill's cleanup.

Third to present was Susan Willeke of Ohio EPA. She reviewed the steps taken over the course of several years by the agency marked by constant change and adaption to community needs as demands and controversy arose. Susan was clear and direct about the challenges posed to Ohio EPA and how those problems were both a hurdle and an opportunity. She said the agency met those challenges with a limited staff while maintaining site community integrity. Susan went on to describe the excellent work of Kurt Kollar, also from Ohio EPA. Kurt's work in the community and his commitment to the cleanup at the Valleycrest site demonstrated not

only his personal charge, but also that of the support staff and Ohio EPA.

The final speaker was Rafael Gonzalez, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator. He used the previous presentations to demonstrate how the community involvement plan was designed to engage the public in a meaningful partnership at the Valleycrest site. During this phase of the presentation, the pivotal activities, meetings and information shared by the other presenters was placed in context in relation to the revised community plan. Rafael validated the process by embodying key community involvement activities after the February 7, 2001, public meeting. These activities precipitated community involvement initiatives that forged a much improved community partnership that eased the cleanup process at Valleycrest.

The presentation was given before environmentalists, media representatives, regional EPA community involvement coordinators, non-profit organization representatives and other meeting participants. Following the presentation, the audience asked many questions about the process and results of the activities. All participants were given a CD of the presentation and an agenda. The presentation was very well received by the audience.

If you would like to receive a copy of the presentation in CD form, please contact Rafael P. Gonzalez at 312-886-0269 or toll-free at 800-621-8431, or e-mail him at gonzalez.rafaelp@epa.gov.

The opinions expressed in the following articles are solely those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Community Speaks Out

Meet Our VNCC Members

Joe and Sharon Vires are long-time residents of Old North Dayton near the Valleycrest Landfill, declared a Superfund site in May 1994. Joe and Sharon attend all the meetings and have provided us with many valuable insights.

"In 1965 at a standing-room only meeting," Joe Vires said, "everyone was opposed to the landfill coming in. People were told by officials, 'it would all decay in 20 years.'" The rest is history as they say, but Joe continued to gather information on landfill activity from 1966 until it finally stopped in 1989.

Joe is of Native American descent and has an innate sense of how water, our most valuable resource, must be protected. He and Sharon are also thinking about the future of their five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

“Great Spirit, whose waters are choked with debris and pollution, help us find ways to cleanse your waters.” (19th century Algonquin Prayer)

ONDNA Hires Citizen Technical Advisors

The Old North Dayton Neighborhood Association is pleased to announce that we have contracted with Henry Cole and Peter Townsend as technical consultants for the Valleycrest Landfill clean up. We welcome them to the team and look forward to working with them on this important effort to protect our community and drinking water supply.

Dr. Henry S. Cole, Ph.D., received a Ph.D in meteorology from the University of Wisconsin. He was an Associate Professor of Environmental Earth Sciences at University of Wisconsin-Parkside. Dr. Cole was the Professor of Environmental Studies at Howard University. He served as a senior scientist and section chief with EPA’s Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards. Dr. Cole also served as Science Director of Clean Water Action. In 1993 he founded Henry S. Cole & Associates, Inc.

Professor Peter H. Townsend, Hydro-log, received his M.S. in geology from the University of Vermont. He is Professor of Environmental Science and Geology and Chair of the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio.

They have both worked with citizens groups across the country and advised them on health, clean up of sites and groundwater protection. They demonstrated that they have the commitment and experience that

we need to watch over the companies cleaning up the site and to advise us on environmental, health and community issues. Since October 2002, Dr. Cole and Professor Townsend have participated in weekly technical meetings at the site with representatives of EPA, Ohio EPA, the Valleycrest Removal Action Coalition, and local responders.

The Community Newsletter and Trailer Are Not Ours!

Over the last few months, officials and citizens have informed and complemented us on our colorful newsletter and our new trailer, except they are not ours. The public relations firm representing the companies (GM, Waste Management and NCR) cleaning up the landfill have put out a newsletter and opened a trailer to address community concerns. Therefore, the VNCC has asked Decision Quest to properly identify their “Community Information” trailer, newsletter and other sources of information as theirs and not to misrepresent us or the community. Decision Quest has said they will work with us to address our concerns. The VRAC has hired a part-time person to occupy their information trailer on the site near Brandt Street to answer citizen questions and put out their newsletter. This person and the newsletter provide information that reflects the views of the VRAC and Decision Quest, not the VNCC or other community sources.

Summer Activities

In June, the VNCC set up a booth at the Old North Dayton Festival. We solicited donations and answered questions about the site. In between the bands and all the festival food, in depth discussions took place concerning Valleycrest.

It takes a Village!!!!!!

Please get involved, if you are interested helping to clean up Valleycrest or have concerns about the site, please give us a call at (937) 277-7194 and attend our next meeting. It takes a Village to clean up a landfill.

Call VNCC at (937) 277-7194 for more information.

Site News from the VRAC

Site Activities Continue; Information Office Opens

The Valleycrest Removal Action Coalition (VRAC) performing activities at Valleycrest Landfill continues to work with EPA and Ohio EPA to investigate and address environmental conditions at the site. These activities involve both on-site and off-site work as well as opening a public information office for interested citizens.

Site-related activities have focused on drum removal and site investigation. Subsurface drum removal and off-site disposal has continued in a safe and effective manner and was completed in Area 1 on November 25, 2002. While subsurface drum removal activities have been completed in Area 1, the treatment of the Area 5 stockpiled debris (contaminated with volatile organic compounds) also moves forward. To treat the stockpiles, the VRAC installed a vapor extraction system to remove volatile organic compounds from the debris. The vapor extraction system is a commonly used technology for removing the compounds, and EPA has approved its use for the debris pile. Monitoring of the system indicates it is functioning properly and reducing the compounds present in the debris.

With respect to the landfill investigation, on-site and off-site sampling continues to help the VRAC better define site conditions. The VRAC appreciates the cooperation of community members in this process, as it will help with the development of a final remedy. The VRAC conducts these activities in compliance with all environmental health and safety standards and with oversight by EPA and Ohio EPA.

In addition to the on-site and off-site work, the VRAC is acting on its commitment to make information more readily available to the community. One example of this commitment is the VRAC's efforts to

open an information office that makes accessible to the community a variety of site-related materials such as maps, photographs, technical documents, fact sheets, reports and other information. The information office, located at 950 Brandt Pike, is staffed by Connie Kraus. Office hours are: Monday, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.; Wednesday, noon - 4 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m. - noon. If these hours are not convenient, please call the community information line at (800) 660-7076 to schedule an appointment.

The VRAC invites you to visit the office to meet Connie and review the various materials. In the interest of providing community members with as much landfill information as possible, the VRAC invited EPA, Ohio EPA, and the VNCC to place their materials at the office. The VRAC also provides information to the community by contributing to this bulletin and conducting periodic mailings of fact sheets, newsletters, flyers, and letters about site activities and safety procedures.

The VRAC also is working with neighbors and other stakeholders to respond to their questions and concerns about landfill activities. The companies will continue to confer with the public to minimize any inconveniences associated with landfill activities. The VRAC encourages community members to call the Valleycrest information line at (800) 660-7076 with any questions or concerns. The VRAC set up the information line specifically for this project, and a voice messaging system is available in case your call is missed. Please leave a message, and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

The VRAC remains committed to responding in a timely manner to issues raised by the community and to conducting site activities in full compliance with all environmental health and safety standards.

The VRAC's Valleycrest Information Line
800-660-7076

Site Photograph Log



Photograph shows a view of the vapor extraction well piping in VOC-contaminated soil and debris stockpiles.



Photograph shows a view of the vapor extraction treatment system.



Photograph shows a view of contractors excavating drums in Area 1.



Photograph shows another view of contractors excavating drums in Area 1.



Photograph shows a view of drum shredding operations.

Valleycrest Removal Update

The VRAC's contractors completed activities in Area 1 (50.5 grids) on November 25, 2002, including subsurface drum excavation, backfilling, and soil sampling. A total of 15,622 subsurface drums were excavated, sampled, and transported for off-site disposal, while 26,986 subsurface drums were removed from Area 5.

Current analytical results from the backfilled soil/debris sampling in Area 1 (post drum removal) have indicated that 17 of 50.5 grids have soil/debris contaminated with TCE and/or PCBs above regulatory levels. The VRAC will be submitting a work plan to EPA by January 31, 2003 to address the remaining soil/debris contamination backfilled in Area 1 removal grids. In December 2002, VRAC contractors completed the "Suspected Buried Tanker Investigation." Based upon EPA geophysical data, VRAC contractors completed ten test trenches and removed approximately 80 subsurface drums for off-site disposal. No tankers were identified during the investigation.

Weekly perimeter monitoring of the landfill gas abatement system continues to show that landfill gas is being controlled from migrating to off-site locations. The VRAC recently completed a stack test of the enclosed flare which is used to treat the collected landfill gas. Results of the stack test will be reviewed by a team of EPA technical experts.

The RI/FS Investigation

Ohio EPA continues to provide oversight for the ongoing Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study at the Valleycrest site. The purpose of this study is to characterize site conditions (for example, geology and ground-water flow), determine the nature and extent of contamination, assess risks to human health and the environment, and evaluate possible cleanup approaches for areas of the site that have the potential to present risk.

The first part of this study, the RI, involves a comprehensive investigation of the site including sampling and monitoring subsurface gas, landfill gas, groundwater, air, soil, and sediments. The field investigation has made significant progress over the summer including the expansion of the monitoring well network. Twenty-five additional monitoring wells and seven leachate wells were installed as part of this summer's work. In September 2002, ground-water samples were collected from these 32 new wells and the 34 existing wells on and near the site. The installation of these new sampling points and the collection of water level and chemical data is an important step in determining ground-water flow direction and pathways of contaminant migration that may be present at the site.

In addition to the monitoring well network, other field activities ongoing at the site include subsurface gas

sampling, landfill gas sampling, air modeling, soil sampling and water level monitoring. Investigation activities planned for the upcoming year include the non-aqueous phase liquid, also called "NAPL" or "free product" investigation, the potential hot spot characterization, additional ground-water sampling, and hydrogeologic modeling. Additional monitoring wells will be considered where collected data suggest that conditions at the site are not yet fully understood.

Following completion of the field investigations and an assessment of potential risks based on the collected data (the RI), potential remedial alternatives (comprehensive cleanup approaches) will be evaluated for the site (the FS). Ohio EPA will propose a site clean-up plan based on the results of this evaluation to the public, and will hold a public hearing to take public comments on the proposed remedy.

The RI/FS is currently scheduled to be completed by April 2005. For further information regarding this investigation and study, please contact Jyl Lapachin at Ohio EPA, (937) 285-6052.

Time Line

Field Work: present - Fall 2003

RI Report: Winter 2003/2004

FS Report: Fall/Winter 2004

More Information

The public is invited to review site-related documents at the following location:

E.C. Doren Public Library
701 Troy Street
Dayton, Ohio

For further information contact:

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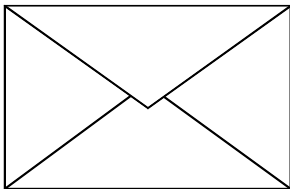
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If you did not receive this bulletin in the mail, then you are not on the EPA Valleycrest site mailing list. If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive further communications from EPA regarding this site, please complete the coupon below and either mail or fax it to Rafael Gonzalez at the address or fax number above.

Please add me to the Valleycrest site mailing list.



Name _____
Affiliation _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____